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WORLD-POLITICS.

LONDON: ST. PETERSBURG: PARIS: WASHINGTON.

April, 1906.

THE "*Frankfurter Zeitung*," a Radical journal, remarked a few weeks ago that South Africa is destined to be the grave of Liberal prospects. The prophecy is, perhaps, a little premature, but it is certain that British South Africa, since I last wrote, has been wrought up into a white heat of resentment against Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Government, and that Liberalism is showing what is supposed to be its familiar incapacity for Imperial rule.

Three times already has the present Government found itself in opposition to the best Imperial sentiment in reference to South Africa. The problems presented by the subcontinent are grave and manifold, and not all of them, by any means, are of the Liberals' own making. They are the legacy of the war and of the introduction of Chinese labor, under conditions that have shocked the moral sense of England, to work the Transvaal mines. The Liberals have decided to give the Transvaal at the earliest possible moment full responsible government, without the intermediate stage of what is called representative government designed by their predecessors. They have also appointed a commission to inquire into the electoral basis of the future Transvaal Constitution, and to settle whether it is to be on a population or a "one vote one value" foundation. The danger hidden in both these questions is that the Boers may outvote the British, and that the very hand that drafted the ultimatum of October, 1899, may within a year be drafting Ministers' minutes for submission to a British Governor who would have no option but to sign them. In regard to Chinese labor, the Liberals have stopped the further importation of coolies, have agreed to repatriate at the Imperial expense such of them as wish to return to China, and have an-

nounced that, before responsible government is granted, the Labor Ordinance will be wiped off the statute-book and the whole question left to the people of the Transvaal to discuss and settle as they please—subject to the inherent right of the Crown to veto any legislation that is inconsistent with British ideas of liberty. These decisions have raised a violent uproar in the Transvaal; but how far the agitation is genuine and how far manufactured, whether it proceeds from the people or only from the mine-owners, it is exceedingly difficult to say. My own conviction is that the Liberals have acted wisely as well as boldly in deciding to grant responsible government and in their treatment of the Chinese labor question, and I firmly believe that time will justify them. In particular, their warning that any measure on the lines of the present Labor Ordinance, even though passed by a responsible Transvaal legislature, will be disallowed by the Imperial Government seems to me wholly justifiable. It has created intense resentment in the Transvaal, where the interference of Downing Street in the internal affairs of the colony has rarely worked for good and is at all times looked upon with the utmost suspicion; and, as a general principle, it is of course right and necessary that the Imperial veto should be rarely invoked. But, unless the British Empire is nothing more than a splendid chaos, the power of vetoing measures that are inimical to the welfare of the Imperial Union or to any of the essential principles of freedom or morality with which the British name is associated, must reside in, and must at times be exercised by, the Imperial Government in Great Britain. Nevertheless, though the Government, as I think, has right and reason on its side, the South-African situation is full of perils; and not the least of those perils is the possibility that the Boers, who still desire independence, and the mine-owners whose sole concern is to obtain cheap Chinese labor and plenty of it, may join forces in an effort to cut the painter.

But the Liberals have only themselves to blame if a situation, already acute, has been needlessly intensified. In a debate that took place in the House of Lords, Lord Milner chivalrously assumed all the responsibility for sanctioning the flogging of Chinese laborers who had been convicted of certain offences. His responsibility, as a matter of fact, was merely nominal and official, but to shield a subordinate he came forward voluntarily and took it upon himself. In view of his splendid services to the Empire,

this small error of judgment might well have been overlooked. But the Radicals, who detest Lord Milner as at once the instrument and the instigator of the policy that provoked the Boer war, seized upon their chance to pillory him. A vote of censure upon him was moved in the House of Commons on March 21st, and the Government, instead of meeting it, as it should have done, with a direct negative, proposed and carried an amendment which condemned the flogging of coolies without mentioning individuals and was aimed at Lord Milner without naming him. In thus refusing to stand by the pilot who weathered the storm, and who won for himself the all but unanimous confidence of the average Englishman, whether at home or in South Africa, the Liberals committed an act which, unjust and treacherous in itself, was peculiarly calculated to inflame South-African sentiment. How little the majority in the House of Commons represented the majority in the nation was shown a week later, when the House of Lords, against the wishes of the Government, but with the entire approval of the man in the street, passed by 170 votes to 35 a resolution expressing "its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire." A national testimonial to Lord Milner was at once set on foot, and from the character and size of the support that has gathered around it the Liberals may learn how unshakable is the hold of the great pro-consul upon the masses of his countrymen and how deeply his betrayal by the Government is resented.

Simultaneously the Liberals were guilty of an even more serious error. There have of late been several risings among the natives of Natal, and a rising among the natives of Natal means all and more than all that an Indian rising meant in America a hundred and fifty years ago. Natal has a white population of little over eighty thousand, scattered among nearly a million blacks. The disturbances had led to the colony's being placed under martial law. On February 8th, a party of police engaged in the collection of the poll-tax was ambushed by natives and two of them were killed. Twenty-four natives were arrested and brought to trial under martial law. They were legally represented, evidence was heard from twelve Europeans and twenty-one blacks, and the court martial, after sitting for eight days, passed sentence of death upon twelve of the twenty-four accused. On Wednesday, March 28th, the British Government was informed by telegram

of what had occurred, and at once ordered the death sentence to be suspended pending further information. From every point of view, that was a most unfortunate proceeding. It threw doubt upon the good faith and honesty of the Natal Government, and the mere postponement of the sentence was bound to prejudice the authority of colonial justice in native eyes and to create that impression of uncertainty and weakness in the ruling powers which, of all impressions, is one that whites who are outnumbered by blacks in the ratio of one to twelve can least afford to inspire. The Natal Premier at once resigned, accompanied by all his colleagues, and supported by the practically unanimous feeling of all South Africa, British and Boer, and, I may add, by the not less unanimous feeling of other colonies. When fuller information reached London, it was seen that the British Government had no warrant, either in law, policy or the circumstances of the case, for its interference. The natives were accordingly executed on April 2nd, but not until many harsh things had been said about courts martial and the Natal colonists by Radical sentimentalists in the House of Commons. An appeal was even made to the Privy Council to save the condemned men, but the Lord Chancellor in delivering judgment made it perfectly clear that the case was not one of appeal from a colonial court, but from an executive act with which the Privy Council had no right to interfere. A righteous anxiety to protect the native races was, of course, the motive of the Government's action, but it was led thereby into an act of overprecipitancy of a peculiarly injurious character.

Nor have the Liberals been very much happier in their dealings with domestic questions. Goethe long ago noted that "every large assembly, no matter what may be the quality of the individuals composing it, is essentially a mob." The Liberals in the House of Commons are a very large assembly, and I am afraid they partake somewhat of the essence of a mob, and a Radical mob at that. The Labor members are already making their mark on English politics, and from neither side of the House have they yet met with any determined resistance. The Government is not yet sure enough of itself to withstand their importunities, and the Opposition appears to have forgotten that it was ever a party of Conservatism. The situation, indeed, is full of heart-rending anomalies. The Protectionists are making it one of the main objects of their tactics to win the good-will of the Labor men.

They hope ultimately to convert them to Tariff Reform, either by direct argument or by letting it be seen that their hopes of constructive social reform cannot be realized so long as England clings to her present fiscal system. They cannot be realized for the simple reason that there is not money enough. But Tariff Reform, whatever else it may or may not do, will at least fill the national exchequer and provide the indispensable funds for a programme of social betterment. In other countries, Protection has produced extravagance. Mr. Chamberlain hopes that in England extravagance may produce Protection. Every proposal that the Labor men put forward meets, therefore, with the willing support of the party that once called itself Conservative. There is thus generated a sort of competition between the Liberals and the Opposition to forward Labor measures. That is why, within the past few weeks, the House of Commons has been found voting in favor of free meals for the children in the public schools, of the payment of Members, and of throwing the expenses of elections upon the rates. That is also why it will probably and before long be found voting in favor of some great housing scheme, or of old-age pensions, or of national works for the unemployed. All these proposals are expensive, yet the Liberals do not care to hold out against them because of their "Progressive" character, and the Protectionists welcome them in the belief that the burden they will throw upon the national finances will be so intolerable as to force the adoption of a Protective tariff.

Nothing could show the power of the Labor men, and the timidity of both the historic parties before it, better than the history of the Government's Trade Disputes Bill. This was the Bill to which every trade-unionist in the country had been looking forward since the House of Lords in the Taff Vale case decided that a union was suable and that its funds could be mulcted in damages. It was because the late Government somewhat contemptuously refused to reverse that decision that the trade-union vote at the recent election went either to the Liberals or to the direct Labor representatives; and there was undoubtedly a strong obligation on the new Cabinet to take a long step in the direction of trade-union wishes. The Bill brought forward at the end of March took that long step. It laid down the principle that any act lawful in the eye of the civil and criminal codes if done by an individual is not unlawful if done by a combination. Second-

ly, the Bill legalized peaceful picketing. Thirdly, it altered the law of agency on behalf of the trade-unions. It proposed that each union should appoint an executive committee for the conduct of strikes, and should be bound only by the acts of that committee or their formally appointed agents. Each agent, on appointment, was to have the scope of his authority strictly defined, and no acts of his that exceeded that authority should be binding on the union. Finally, if any self-constituted agent purported to act with the authority of the union, his acts should not bind it if immediately repudiated by the executive. Taken together, these provisions amounted to conferring upon trade-unions a position of privilege such as belongs to no other corporate bodies in the kingdom. But they were very far from satisfying the Labor men. What the Labor men demanded was a reversion to the *status quo* that obtained before the Taff Vale decision. They insisted, in other words, upon the principle of entire immunity for all trade-union funds. A Bill to this effect was introduced by a Labor member immediately after the Government's Bill, and to the amazement of Parliament and the country the Cabinet threw their own measure overboard and adopted the Labor Bill. But, if their action was astounding, the attitude of the Opposition was not less unprincipled. Five years ago, the whole of the Conservative party would have fought to the last ditch sooner than place trade-unions outside and above the common law. To-day, hardly a whisper of protest is heard except privately, and there are even Conservative journals already imploring the House of Lords not to jeopardize the prospects of Tariff Reform by such an alienation of the Labor party as would follow on the Upper Chamber's rejection of the proposal to exempt trade-unions from all financial liability for illegal acts. Whether the House of Lords will heed this timid advice I do not know; but I believe that, if it were to make a resolute stand and insist that trade-unions should be treated justly but without subserviency, the common sense of the country would be found on its side. The whole incident is typical of the invertebrate chaos to which Mr. Chamberlain's plunge into Protection has reduced English politics. It is a condition that cannot last; and, in the vigor and earnestness with which the Education Bill, introduced by Mr. Birrell on April 9th, has thus far been attacked and defended, there are the tokens of a much-needed convalescence.

ST. PETERSBURG, April, 1906.

BEFORE this number of the REVIEW is in the hands of its readers, the Russian people will have entered upon a new era of their history. The project of the Duma, which was vague and shadowy a few weeks ago, is now rapidly assuming concrete form. The elections are in full swing, and popular excitement—far less intense than it would be in the United States or any other constitutional country—is at its highest pitch. At the meetings which are being held in the cities, the speakers become rhapsodical and the hearers ecstatic.

But outside the cities the people are calm, one might even say indifferent. And it would be a miracle were they otherwise. For they have no adequate idea of the Duma, of representative government or of the delegation of powers; indeed, many of them are literally incapable of grasping these conceptions. What else is to be expected of a peasantry who live like animals and think like children, of a peasantry who believed that the Japanese were invisible insects that crept into the Russian soldiers' top-boots and killed them infallibly? The Duma has in most cases no more meaning for the peasant than the word "hypotenuse" or "isosceles triangle." Why, therefore, should he worry about it?

The wonder, indeed, is not that only twenty-five, twenty or even ten per cent. of the voters went to the poll, but that such a large percentage as even that gave themselves the trouble to go and choose electors. In many districts, no peasants would have discharged their civic duties had it not been for the priests who exhorted them to come and choose the most suitable men. This action of the priests was largely the result of the intervention of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, Prince Obolensky, who sent a circular to the clergy of the Empire enjoining them to explain the rôle of the Duma, and the importance of the elections, to their flocks, and to exhort them to vote for the best men irrespective of political parties. His predecessor, Pobiedonostseff, would certainly never have done anything so reasonable.

But, in spite of explanations and exhortations, the peasants remained largely incorrigible. And their methods generally smacked of dovelike simplicity rather than of the wisdom of the serpent. For instance, in the province of Tula, when told by the Marshal of the Nobility that they ought to pick the most helpful man to look after their needs in the Duma, they ac-

quiesced, saying: "Very well, in God's name let us do it. Get all the names down; put them into a pot and shake them up, and . . ." "Ah, no," cried the Marshal, "that is not what we mean by election. You are yourselves to choose a man whom you know to be good, not to trust to chance, which may be favorable to a fellow who is downright bad." But the peasantry were obstinate. The matter had to be thoroughly threshed out, and in the course of the arguments some of them urged that, by drawing lots, God's will would be fulfilled, whereas deliberate choice would mean the sinful will of man. After much parleying, they still objected: "But we cannot vote for anybody. We don't know each other." Finally, it was arranged that, as they had come from the north, south, east and west, they should form into four groups and each one set up a candidate. The result, however, was that each group secretly turned against its own candidate, who had only one vote in his favor—doubtless his own.

In another place, where there were no balls available to serve for voting purposes, nuts were used instead; but, in the course of the preliminary discussion, the peasants, who love to munch nuts and sunflower seeds, mechanically ate up the nuts, and then had to put off the election until a fresh supply was fetched. In the village of Troitsky, the elder of the canton was a candidate, and, rumor says, not a very popular one. However this may have been, he was elected by a big majority, and this is how it was unwittingly obtained. The man standing at the urn, who was put there to give explanations to his fellow peasants, cried out: "Electors to the right." He meant that they were to stand on the right, whereas they all imagined that he was ordering them to put the balls into the right section of the urn. It was only towards the end that their mistake was discovered, and then it was deemed improper to begin the voting over again. When the votes were counted, the elder had a big majority, but three balls were lacking. On inquiry, it was found that the individuals who had them, not knowing what to do with them, simply put them in their pockets.

The stories told of the less unsophisticated inhabitants of the enlightened cities of the Empire are equally characteristic, showing the depth of individual ignorance and the intensity of the general fear of meddling in politics. For example, the Moscow State Government Board sent out a number of controllers to ascer-

tain whether the registered voters were really qualified, and to inform those who were that they were expected to fill up a form and exercise their rights. Among the people thus visited were heads of industrial firms, merchants, owners of house property, tradesmen and others. This is the narrative of one of the controllers:

“‘Ivanoff,’ I exclaimed to a salesman in the principal goods store, ‘you are qualified to become an elector for the Imperial Duma.’ Ivanoff grows as white as a sheet, straightens himself out, and, in a faltering voice, scarcely audible, says: ‘I have never been accused of meddling in politics, never. . .’ Five or six other salesmen draw near, and make a circle round him in a twinkling. Some of them are maliciously grinning: ‘Well, at last you are caught, eh? Ha! ha! Now you’ll be taught a lesson.’ Others look serious, gloomy, and obviously sympathize with Ivanoff. ‘What makes you do it?’ asks the lady proprietor. ‘Why are you wrecking a young life? See what is happening in other cities. Here’s the paper; read. They write about Warsaw to-day. How can any one allow his name to be put down as an elector under such conditions? It would be to seek destruction!’ Ivanoff, dismayed, excited, does not know what to do, and looks interrogatively up at his comrades. At long last, after much deliberation, they decided to advise him to return the paper without filling it up. But he glanced at me as he did so, and asked: ‘Will nothing befall me for this?’ I assured him he could return the blank form with impunity; but mistrustfully he shook his head, crying: ‘I’ve got caught! Oh, I’ve got caught!’”

If, in spite of their preternatural ignorance and irrational fear, the people are now coming forward to vote, it is a healthy sign for which patriotic Russians are thankful. That they should elect so many members of the Constitutional Democratic Party is at once a symptom of the progress made by reform agitation, and of the relative liberty of choice allowed by the authorities. Pressure, of course, there has been from above, brutal pressure, which eschews all forms; but then it is only local, emanating from this man or that, not exercised by orders from the Government. Thus in one place, to my knowledge, the immediate superior of the peasants, the Zemsky-Nachalnik, exclaimed: “Vote for X., because he is the Tsar’s man. If you vote for Y. you shall go to Archangel, every man Jack of you!” And they accordingly voted for X. There can be no doubt that, if the Government really wished to engineer the elections, they could readily hinder the return of so many aggressive enemies of their own régime. In the first Russian Duma, then, there will be a solid,

well-disciplined Opposition, which will give the friends of Tsardom work and worry without end.

When the Imperial Duma meets, as it assuredly will meet in a few weeks, what course are events likely to take? That is the question which is now exercising the sagacity of Russians of all parties. Will the Opposition turn the Government out and take over the reins of power? And, if it cannot effect this, will it at least compel the Ministers to make a compromise on pain of suffering from a complete deadlock which would render all legislation impossible? In order to answer this question, one must bear in mind the functions of the Duma. Count Witté foreseeing the fire and audacity with which the nation's representatives might be expected to act, heedless of rules and regulations, gave them a counterpoise in the members of the Upper Chamber, half of whom are appointed by the Government. The two Chambers possess the same functions and rights; neither can make a law without the consent of the other, and the Tsar's sanction. This is the view the Liberals take of what can and will be done. If the Duma be composed on the one hand of a strong single-minded Opposition, and on the other of a number of fractions which cannot combine and are made up chiefly of peasants, the Liberal Opposition will try first to win over a sufficient body of these and then block the progress of all legislation, unless . . . And there the negotiations with the Government will begin.

For parliamentary obstruction on these lines is possible, the Democrats affirm. And they illustrate the way in which it would work by considering the bills drawn up by the Finance Minister, which, they say, are urgent, if anything is.

The Empire is in need of money—of a vast sum of money. To make the nation help find this sum, the Minister proposes to levy a tax upon all private incomes, upon gas, electricity, and paper. That bill will be thrown out by the Duma, the Liberals say, unless the Government strikes a compromise with the Opposition, and yields a portion of its just demands. What can the Ministers do but yield? That argument is more specious than convincing. Suppose the *quid pro quo* demanded by the Opposition is more than the authorities are willing to concede and that they refuse it, what then? Suppose the Opposition manages to get a majority against the financial schemes of M. Shipoff, and that the forty or fifty million dollars on which he

counted are kept out of the imperial coffers? What then? Nothing. The Government, if it have meanwhile raised a loan abroad, may readily dispense with the proceeds of Shipoff's taxes, and it can block reform measures brought in by the Opposition.

But it is to be hoped that the new assembly will look upon things as they really are, and endeavor to make the best of them. In that case, it will certainly have ample scope for beneficent action. There is, for instance, the all-important question of the lot of the peasantry to be solved, whose benighted mental state and wretched condition call for immediate betterment. Yearly there are local famines in the Empire, now in one place, now in another, which, in nine cases out of ten, might be warded off or greatly alleviated by legislation. Thus, if the peasantry were sufficiently well instructed to grasp the advantages of intensive land culture, of artificial manure, the produce of the soil and their annual income might be quadrupled, while the vain cry for more land would grow weaker.

If the Duma meets, however, it will not be without considerable opposition on the part of the revolutionists, who are still to the fore and ever on the war-path. Of late they have altered their tactics but not their aims, which are purely destructive. Resolved to allow nobody to enjoy half a loaf because they themselves prefer a whole one, they pursue their own objects without bestowing much thought upon the well-being of the community at large. And, as they cannot repeat the Moscow experiment, throw up barricades and cause all trade and industry to cease, they confine themselves to murder, arson, and train-wrecking—crimes which, they hold, are turned into patriotic deeds by the circumstance that the motive is politically good.

There is no Government in Russia at present worthy of the name. The so-called "Cabinet" is a house divided against itself, and is therefore bound soon to fall. The Prime Minister is never consulted by the Minister of the Interior, who makes life a burden to thousands of the Tsar's subjects and fills the prisons with men and women, some of whom are obviously innocent of political crimes or misdemeanors, and have never been charged with any. Very often, indeed, the penal measures to which M. Durnovo has recourse are not even communicated to the other Ministers, who hear of them casually or not at all. "It is better that a thousand innocent persons should suffer than that one

guilty man should escape," would seem to be the maxim followed by the Minister of the Interior. It is, of course, meet that apostles of violence should be rendered harmless and murderers be condignly punished; but it is dangerous, as well as immoral, to condemn innocent people to undergo the fate of heinous criminals. And that is what M. Durnovo is doing almost every day. Moreover, he seems constitutionally unable to sign an order for the release of any person behind whom the heavy prison doors have once shut. In vain do petitions come in, accompanied by proofs of the arrested man's innocence; the presumption is against the prisoner, and efforts to disprove the charge are disregarded.

The result of this game of equilibristics is that there is at present no Cabinet, no solidarity among the Ministers, no concerted action against the enemy, and no man who can speak to the Tsar's subjects in the name of the Russian nation. The nation, like many other nations, is divided on almost every political question; but, unlike all others, it appears to be united on only one point—hatred of Count Witté, whose crime is that he built upon circumstance, resigned himself to the inevitable and refused to throw away half a loaf because he failed to get a whole one. There is not a single man sufficiently beloved, nor any political ideal or principle sufficiently appreciated, to unite the Russian population, who are unanimous only in disliking the one man to whom they owe peace abroad and representative government at home.

One Minister seeking to trip up another is among the salient characteristics of latter-day Russian Government;—Durnovo *versus* Witté and the Jews. A violent and vile appeal to the murderous instincts of the masses, holding up to their execrations Count Witté, his wife (the *Countess*), the Jews, the English and the German peoples, was printed in the office of the police prefect and approved and stamped by an official of the Ministry of the Interior. One can hardly believe it possible, yet there is no doubt whatever that it is a fact. The matter has been officially brought to the notice of the Russian Government by foreign diplomats, after which apologies and explanations were tendered and accepted.

When the leaders of a nation are guilty of such excesses, one cannot affect surprise that the criminal elements of the population should show themselves peculiarly perverse. The general bent towards the employment of violence against life and property, even when no benefit can be reaped from it, is appalling.

Killing might be said without exaggeration to have become a pleasure in many parts of Russia. Well-dressed persons walking down the streets in Riga, in Moscow, in Odessa, have been deliberately stabbed in the back, because they had not humble raiment on. Travellers by rail are still in danger of being wrecked and killed under horrible conditions, because the revolutionists would like to frighten the Government. Every week, railway bridges over ravines and rivers are destroyed in the dead of the night, in the hope that the next train will drop down there. Bombs are being manufactured to be thrown from the visitors' gallery on to the floor of the Duma. The property of men of all shades of political opinion and of none at all is unsafe, and may be seized at any moment by fellows who come armed with bombs to private or State banks, and threaten to blow up the officials. And, bad as that is, there is still worse: society, or at all events a considerable section of it, appears to approve these deeds. Youths of the grammar-schools, fired by this perverse public opinion, are burning to emulate the achievements of the gang who robbed the Mutual Credit Society in Moscow of nearly half a million dollars. Several schoolboys attempted it in one of the principal banks of Kharkoff a few days ago, and severely wounded a policeman who sought to capture them. The people who approve this crime and call it a patriotic deed are many, whereas those who raise their voice against it are few. Doubtless, a powerful movement will be got up in favor of the boys already in custody, for the purpose of screening them from punishment—and then other lads will go and do likewise.

But the assassination of Durnovo is the next item in the revolutionary programme. And the Minister knows it. Witté's life is also threatened, and both men have been warned by the police to stay within doors. But Durnovo alone acts upon the advice, while Witté runs the risk. The plot has been discovered only in part; the majority of the conspirators are still at liberty; and the manufactory where the bombs are being prepared has not yet been found.

But the predicted railway and general strike has not come off. The conditions are no longer propitious. In truth, there can be no general strike in Russia, no armed rising, no ruinous paralysis of trade and industry, such as the Government had to cope with last November. For the workmen are disillusioned and ex-

hausted, the troops are numerous and loyal, the police is adequate and ready and the country is relatively quiet. Thus, despite isolated cases of robbery and murder, Poland is more tranquil to-day than for several years past. The rising in the Baltic Provinces is virtually quelled. The civil war in the Caucasus has burned out. The trade returns are improving rapidly. The railway takings are much better than could have been reasonably expected. The savings-banks have got their deposits back again. In a word, in spite of disquieting surface manifestations, the general state of the country is vastly improved; and, if the Government succeeds in raising the loan it is negotiating, the meeting of the Duma may indeed mark the beginning of a new and prosperous era for Holy Russia.

PARIS, April, 1906.

THE first event of consequence since my last letter was the Presidential election. It came off with incredible smoothness. There were only two candidates: M. Fallières and M. Doumer. The latter was, as I pointed out at the time, personally far superior to his rival. No individuality can be more strongly marked than that of a man who has risen from the situation of an engraver's apprentice to the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies, and who professes to set his face against anticlerical excesses whilst refusing to have his children baptized.

The former is only a lucky politician, whose integrity, coupled with industry and staunch loyalty to republican institutions, brought him gradually, and without either scandal or glory, to the first offices in the State. It can hardly be doubted that the very reason of M. Fallières's success and M. Doumer's failure lies in the notion, prevalent in this democracy, that the Chief Executive should only be the agent of Parliament, and that he becomes dangerous the moment he betrays any inclination to preserve ever so little political influence.

At the time of M. Fallières's election, the situation was as follows: Algéciras was still a source of anxiety, but every day lessened the chances of a war, for which, on the other hand, France was every day better prepared; the army felt stronger; the Socialist Minister of War, Berteaux, had been compelled to make room for M. Etienne, a man of moderate views; the Cabinet was, at last, homogeneous, and M. Rouvier seemed pretty sure of re-

maining in office until the general election in May. On the whole, the political situation was excellent, and nobody dreamt that the little black cloud caused by the separation of Church and State would bring such a terrible storm.

For a hundred years, the situation of the Catholic Church in France was regulated by the Concordat passed between Pius VI and Napoleon, then First Consul. The broad lines of this agreement were: on the part of the Church, the abandonment of most of the ecclesiastical property confiscated or sold during the Revolution, and the recognition of the right of the State to appoint the Bishops and other dignitaries; on the part of the State, the payment of a yearly salary to the clergy, the Bishops receiving 2,000 dollars, the Canons 400 dollars and the parish priests 180 dollars. This arrangement, in spite of occasional rubs, worked, on the whole, satisfactorily.

What, then, may have been the causes of the severance we have just witnessed, and who is responsible for the breach between the two powers, civil and religious? The answer is plain: there is no spirit of tolerance in this country. Tolerance is based on the idea that religion should be an individual affair, for which the individual ought never to be molested. Now, it is a fact that a certain portion of the French clergy look upon this modern idea of tolerance as a heresy, and view the Church as a sort of mould, shaping and encompassing the State. On the other hand, the anticlerical politician is no less violently opposed, not only to the Church, but even to the Christian ideal, and maintains that the belief in God and the soul stands in the way of all progress. M. Combes, when at the height of his power, was hooted from the tribune for saying he believed in the soul; and, a year ago, M. Brunetière, who confessedly has no rival as a professor of French literature, was, by an official decision and in spite of an unanimous vote, kept out of the Collège de France, exclusively on the score of his religious opinions. This spirit creates a state of tension which results, on the one side, in anticlerical laws, and, on the other, in a bitter feeling on the part of Catholics. The minor causes are many. Suffice it to say that, for more than thirty years, M. Clémenceau won adhesions to the principle of separation by pointing out the absurdity of Catholics contributing towards the maintenance of Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis, and of free-thinkers supporting priests whom they hated.

As to the final rupture, it was occasioned by the visit made in 1903 to the King of Italy by President Loubet. The Pope expressed his discontent at having been ignored in a confidential circular which found its way from the Prince of Monaco's archives into the columns of Jaurès's newspaper, and, from that day, Disestablishment was only a question of months. The Bill was passed by the Chamber in June, 1905, and by the Senate in December, without a single modification.

The new state of things brought about by the Separation Law can be described clearly and briefly enough. In the first place, the Churches,—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish—are henceforward to be regarded as mere Associations, and dealt with according to the Law of 1901 on Associations. Consequently, the Pope, Bishops and priests will be ignored as spiritual leaders, and recognized only as belonging to, or presiding over, Associations of a certain character. These Associations are to consist—according to the population of the parish they represent—of seven, fifteen or twenty-five members. With these alone will the civil authorities have any intercourse. If these Associations are legally established within six months of the promulgation of the law, they will be entitled (a) to the possession of the churches and synagogues for an unlimited period, (b) to the use of the seminaries and presbyteries for five years, (c) to pensions of between 100 and 120 dollars to be paid to priests, ministers and rabbis upwards of fifty-five years of age, (d) to civil personality—i. e., the power to own property, which, however, is qualified by rather stringent regulations, for the Associations will be bound to submit their accounts to the State inspectors, to invest all their property in stocks, and the said property must in no case be such as to bring in more than the income necessary for a year's expenditure *plus* a small reserve.

The reader must see at once that this system cannot be said to be altogether liberal, yet it is comparatively so. Some Catholics were immediately for accepting it; others remembering the use made by M. Combes of M. Waldeck-Rousseau's law on Associations, and hearing the same M. Combes, M. Sembat, and numbers of Socialists bluntly say that the present Disestablishment Act was only a stepping-stone to further measures, betrayed considerable diffidence. All were agreed that no decision could be come to until the *règlement d'administration* (i. e., regulations

drawn up by the Council of State for the use of tribunals) was published.

In January, the "Gazette" printed the first instalment of these regulations dealing with the inventory of Church property. This inventory was the first step towards the transfer of Church property to the new Associations. It was an indispensable process, and nobody would have objected to it, had the Government waited to begin it until the *règlement* was complete. Unfortunately, M. Rouvier ordered the inventory to be taken at once in all churches, and, by an even more unfortunate error, a Ministerial circular was issued stating that in cases of resistance, the churches, sacristies, and even the tabernacles (in which the sacred vessels are kept) should be broken open. The Minister explained in a few days that the part of the circular concerning the tabernacles was an unaccountable mistake, but the impression left was that the Government was going to carry on by force an operation which was to have been peaceable.

The Royalist and Nationalist press could not lose such an opportunity. They spread the rumor that the inventory was the first stage of confiscation, and the result was the sudden agitation which began in Paris and reached its climax in Auvergne and Brittany. Rowdy scenes took place in thousands of churches when the Government officials attempted to take the inventory, and two deaths were recorded. Another, quite unexpected, result was the fall of M. Rouvier. The Premier had always been a very lukewarm partisan of Separation and was glad to leave the uncongenial work to another.

M. Fallières entrusted the thankless task of forming a cabinet to M. Sarrien. This gentleman is no orator, but he has considerable authority, and he has succeeded in persuading a dozen men from every point of the political horizon to join him in a risky venture. The characteristic of the new cabinet is its motley aspect. Its chief members are M. Leygues and M. Barthou, both moderates, M. Léon Bourgeois, the well-known radical, and at last MM. Clémenceau and Briand. Nobody could have dreamt that the last two named would ever sit together on the same bench. M. Briand is Jaurès's lieutenant, and, during the last six months, M. Clémenceau had waged merciless war against the Socialists. The dreaded ironist seemed farther than ever from accepting office; yet there he is, cheek by jowl with M. Briand,

while the latter cannot but see sticking out of M. Barthou's pocket the counter-project destined to throw out his own fondest plan for the legal, and supremely dangerous, recognition of trades-unions for State functionaries. To make matters look worse for M. Fallières's first government, M. Clémenceau had insisted that the Home Office should be entrusted to him, and this meant nothing if not that he wanted to carry on the Church inventories by a violent method.

So the situation offered, when the new Government first appeared before the Chamber, a dismal picture of terrible difficulties at home, coupled with no less terrible difficulties at Algeciras, and, to cope with them, one saw the least homogeneous cabinet that ever was, with M. Clémenceau, the most explosive of men, as a leader.

In spite of this dark horizon, we passed from one Government to the other without feeling any oscillation. The German diplomats at Algeciras hove to for a while, waiting for the wind, but they soon saw that only a man was changed. For a few days, M. Léon Bourgeois had long conversations with M. Rouvier—does the reader know that even M. Delcassé comes to the Foreign Office almost every day?—firmness remained the word, and things went on at the Conference as if nothing had happened in Paris. As M. Bourgeois had taken the watchword from M. Rouvier, so M. Clémenceau consented to take it from M. Dubief. The day after entering office, the fire-eater gave orders that no inventory should be taken where the least resistance was offered, and, by the time the Conference came to a happy termination, order was at least apparently restored in the country.

Are these happy symptoms a sign that the future is clear for the new cabinet? The reader will judge for himself when I have stated a few points of fact.

France has certainly been a gainer in the Moroccan affair. I do not mean that the outlook in Morocco is, from a colonial point of view, very bright. The German press talks, indeed, of a preponderating French influence; but it seems clear that the arrangements made at Algeciras leave the Republic less free than she was. The benefit France has derived from a year's contest with Germany is exclusively a moral one. The country has recovered from the panic which attended M. Delcassé's resignation, the army is in better training, the German bugbear is reduced to

its true proportions of a bugbear, and the *entente cordiale* which had left many a Frenchman sceptical is at present a fact beyond doubt. The Russian alliance, too, thanks to the success of the Russian loan in February, is evidently reviving.

This is the cheerful aspect of things. Unfortunately, there is another. The religious difficulty is only apparently at rest. On July 1st, the law has to be enforced, and if no Associations appear to claim the churches, the churches shall be closed. Now the question is: Will the Pope allow or prohibit the establishment of Associations? Twenty-three eminent laymen have recently, in a letter drawn up by M. Brunetiere, advised the Bishops to submit, but the letter was coldly received in Rome. On the other hand, a violent article in which M. de Mun advocates resistance seems to have been approved. If this course should be adopted, the scenes which have followed on the attempts to take inventories would become little short of a civil war when the churches were closed.

Then there are the social and economic difficulties. Socialist proselytizing has been continuously increasing, and with such efficiency that the group will probably rise to about ninety members in the next Chamber. The organization of the party is extremely strong. The trades-unions have established no less than 110 Labor Exchanges at which thousands of syndicates are entered, enjoying legal privileges and possessing large reserves. During the last two years, there has been a wide-spread agitation in favor of extension to the State servants of the right of forming syndicates and trades-unions. I pointed out above that the leader of this agitation is no less a person than M. Briand, at present Minister of Education, and its chief opponent, M. Clémenceau, Minister of the Interior. The catastrophe in the Courrières coal-pits has caused a miners' strike, which, if the Socialist leaders do not change their minds, will develop, on May 1st, into a *general strike*. The violence of the Socialist papers is now at its height, and the coincidence of the general election (May 6th and 20th) with the date of the strike only makes them the more ardent for action. What will M. Briand do, bound as he is by his theories and promises, and what will M. Clémenceau do? An awkward note of interrogation, indeed.

Of the election, the reader must not be surprised that I say nothing. Prophecy is childish, and changes are improbable.

No French election will be comparable to, for instance, the English election, until this country reaches a political stage which may not be far off, and becomes sharply divided into Socialists and Anti-Socialists.

WASHINGTON, *April, 1906.*

DURING this month, President Roosevelt has again played the star part on the national stage. By two speeches and a Special Message to Congress, he has riveted popular attention on his personality. The address delivered at the White House to a body of German veterans was generally regarded as significant, and was of especial interest to the diplomatic corps, because it indicated a distinct change of attitude toward Germany since the control of our State Department passed from the late John Hay to Elihu Root. During the whole of the tenure of the Secretaryship of State by Mr. Hay, our Government had visibly striven to bring about a union of hearts between the English-speaking peoples. It was almost inevitable that, with such a purpose in mind, our State Department should evince more and more coldness toward Germany, the relations between which and Great Britain have for some time been strained. Ultimately an understanding between Great Britain, France and the United States, which, while not embodied in any formal treaty, might prove in practice equally effective, was earnestly advocated by some influential newspapers, and was believed to have Mr. Hay's hearty approval. It must, however, be acknowledged that this departure from our traditional policy of aloofness was eyed askance, not only by millions of American citizens of German birth or descent, but also by many of those so-called "native Americans" who can trace their lineage to Colonial forefathers, and who still find it hard to forget the War of the Revolution and the War of 1812. Mr. Root is no more biassed by Anglophilism than by Anglophobia. Faithful to the traditions of the Republic, he desires friendship with all foreign Powers, but entangling alliances with none. Under the changed circumstances, conciliatory overtures from the German sovereign have met with a sympathetic reception, with the result that, while our relations with Great Britain have been in no wise chilled, our relations to Germany are now more cordial than they have been for years. The words spoken by the President to the German veterans were fitted, and doubtless

calculated, to draw the two peoples more closely together, and they have naturally called forth many expressions of gratification on the part of the German press. It is also recognized in Berlin that American esteem for Germany has been attested by deeds as well as words, our representative in the Morocco Conference having evidently been instructed not to give indiscriminate support to the proposals put forward by Great Britain and France, but rather to play the part of mediator and compromiser between those Powers and Germany.

By the remarkable speech which he delivered on April 14th, on the occasion of laying the cornerstone of the office-building of the House of Representatives, Mr. Roosevelt succeeded in offending many of his political opponents, and in alarming many of his friends. So far, indeed, as the speech dealt with its ostensible subject, "The Man with the Muck-rake," it must have commended itself strongly to the Federal Senate, which has been of late subjected to wholesale vilification, and has been ridiculously accused of "treason." The President, on his part, did not deny that, when there is filth on the floor, it must be scraped up with the muck-rake, but he expressed the conviction that the man who never does anything else—who never thinks or speaks or writes save of his feats with the muck-rake—speedily becomes, not a help to society, not an incitement to good, but one of the most potent forces for evil. Mr. Roosevelt recognized that there ought to be relentless exposure of, and attack upon, every evil man, whether politician or man of affairs, and every evil practice, whether in politics, business or social life. He would hail, he says, as a benefactor every writer or speaker who, on the platform or in book, magazine or newspaper, makes such an attack with merciless severity, *provided only*, however, that the assailant, in his turn, remembers that the attack is never of use unless it is absolutely truthful. In the President's judgment, the liar is no better than the thief, and, if the liar's mendacity takes the form of slander or libel, he may be worse than most thieves. An epidemic of indiscriminate and hysterical assault on character does no good, but very great harm. The soul of every scoundrel is gladdened whenever an honest man is assailed, or even when a scoundrel is untruthfully assailed. The President showed himself an adept in that political philosophy of which Burke is the exemplar, when he pointed out, with reference to the campaign

of wholesale and extravagant vilification now going on in the United States, that any excess is almost sure to invite a reaction, and, unfortunately, the reaction, instead of taking the form of punishment of those guilty of the excess, is very apt to take the form either of punishment of the unoffending, or of giving immunity to the offenders. The difficulty which he himself has experienced in getting the right type of men to dig the Panama Canal has given convincing proof of the fact that gross and reckless assaults on reputation, whether on the stump or in newspapers and magazines, create a morbid and vicious public sentiment, and, at the same time, act as an almost insuperable deterrent to able men of normal sensitiveness, and tend to prevent them from entering the public service at any price.

The President's auditors, who for months have been deafened with a storm of objurgations, must have drawn a deep breath of satisfaction when he testified to what he and they well know, to wit, that there is a vast amount of good in the world, and that there never was a time when loftier and more disinterested work for the betterment of mankind was being done than now. Undoubtedly, the forces that make for evil are great and terrible, but the forces of truth, and love, and courage, and honesty, and generosity, and sympathy are also mightier than they ever were before. Wild sensationalism was stigmatized as the very poorest weapon wherewith to fight for lasting righteousness. Men who with stern sobriety and truth assail the many evils of our time, whether in the public press or on the platform, were acclaimed by Mr. Roosevelt as the leaders and allies of all engaged in the work for social and political amelioration. He did not fail, however, to point out that, if agitators give good reasons for distrust of what they say, they thereby play into the hands of the very men against whom they are ostensibly at war.

The worst about indiscriminate and hysterical assaults upon public men is that it is, unfortunately, easy to persuade the mass of a people that it is improperly governed. The reason was pointed out more than three centuries ago by Hooker, the eminent Elizabethan divine, from whom Mr. Roosevelt quoted a pertinent passage, to the effect that "he who goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, will never lack attentive and favorable hearers, because the hearers can perceive the manifold defects whereunto every kind

of regimen is subject; whereas the secret hindrances and difficulties which, in public proceedings, are innumerable and inevitable, the masses have not ordinarily the wit to consider or even to guess."

Elsewhere, in this memorable speech, Mr. Roosevelt adverted to the iniquitous warping of the public mind, produced by those magazines and newspapers which confine their indictments to the derelictions of the rich. He solemnly warned his auditors that no good whatever can come from the twisted and mock morality which denounces the misdeeds of men of wealth, and overlooks the misdeeds practised at their expense; which fulminates against bribery, but blinds itself to blackmail; which foams with rage if a corporation secures favors by improper methods, and merely leers with hideous mirth if the corporation is itself wronged. There are those who think that Mr. Roosevelt had in mind the ideal which he himself has tried to realize, when he said that the only public servant who can be trusted honestly to protect the rights of the public against the misdeeds of a corporation is that public man who will just as surely protect the corporation itself from wrongful aggression. It is certainly true that, if a public man is willing to yield to popular clamor and do wrong to men of wealth or to rich corporations, there is reason to fear that, whenever the opportunity comes, he will do wrong secretly and furtively to the public in the interest of a corporation.

That part of the speech delivered by Mr. Roosevelt on April 14th which dealt with "The Man with the Muck-rake" was adapted, as we have said, to exasperate not a few of his political opponents. He injected, however, a paragraph which has undoubtedly frightened many of his friends. Having in mind the possible use which might be made of stupendous accumulations by ambitious or vicious heirs of very wealthy men, Mr. Roosevelt avowed that, as a matter of personal conviction, and without pretending to discuss details, or formulate a system, he felt that we in the United States shall ultimately have to consider the adoption of some such scheme as that of a progressive tax on all fortunes beyond a certain amount, whether transferred by gift during the owner's life, or devised or bequeathed by him, to any single individual. The purpose, of course, of such a tax as Mr. Roosevelt contemplates is to put it out of the power of the owner of an enormous fortune to hand over more than a

certain fraction of it to any one person. Whether the imposition of a progressive inheritance tax by the Federal Government would be constitutional is doubtful, and a preponderance of authority favors the opinion that a constitutional amendment for the purpose would be required. Such a constitutional amendment might not be easily secured, because the States which now monopolize the right of levying an inheritance tax might resent the intrusion of the Federal Government on that field. The fact that a progressive inheritance tax exists in Great Britain proves nothing, because that country possesses no written Constitution, and every Act of Parliament is valid. Apparently, Mr. Roosevelt would go further than British legislation has gone. We infer from his words that, after a certain limit had been reached, the decedent's power to devise or bequeath property would cease, and all the rest of his estate would be escheated to the Commonwealth. In Great Britain, the legislator has not put any limit on the amount which may be left by a decedent to any single individual. He merely says that the larger the amount inherited by a single person the higher shall be the rate of the legacy duty which that person must pay. We incline to think, as we have said, that, if the transmission of colossal fortunes by inheritance is prevented in this country, it will not be by Federal, but by State, legislation. It may be remembered that a resolute attempt in this direction was made some years ago in the State of New York, but, although the bill to that end passed both the Senate and the Assembly, it was vetoed by Governor Black.

As for the Special Message which President Roosevelt sent to Congress on April 18th, it would have attracted more notice, had not the awful seismic catastrophe which laid waste San Francisco occurred on the same day. In the Message, the President recommended the passage of legislation giving such a construction to the laws under which the beef-packers were lately tried in Chicago, as to render it impossible hereafter for defendants who give information in Federal antitrust cases to claim immunity from prosecution, an immunity which District-Judge Humphrey has upheld. The latter's interpretation of the existing statutes is described by Mr. Roosevelt as coming measurably near to making the law a farce, and for that reason he urges Congress to pass a declaratory act defining its real intention. We, doubtless, may take it for granted that this suggestion will be heeded.